The table is used in precisely the same manner as we have exemplified at pages 499 and 513, and need not therefore be again explained, but the application to other forms of sections now much approved of, will be the subject of another communication. T.

WESTMINSTER COURT OF SEWERS.

A VERY numerous meeting of the commissioners took place on Friday, the 7th instant. The cash at the bankers was reported to be 16,624*l.* 0*s.* 5*d.*

On an application for warrants of distress against certain inhabitants of the western division, the chairman said, "not to-day." Mr. Leslie called upon the chairman to say why he would not sign the warrants of distress or to let the Court be informed of the reason? and then proceeded to say that the inhabitants of the western division had been made to pay upwards of 16,000*l.* since February last, while the whole amount of the contractors' bills from Nov. 1841 to Michaelmas 1845, for the western division, amounted only to 1,200*l.* 7*s.* 11*d.* that 1360 of the inhabitants of the western division had been summoned to the Court to shew cause why warrants of distress should not be issued against their goods, and 245 warrants of distress had actually been signed by the commissioners. There being no reply, the matter dropped.

Nearly 4,500 feet of sewers of the new forms were granted to various applicants.

The clerk then read a letter he had received from the Under Secretary of State, of which the following is a copy.

Whitehall, 1st November, 1845.

SIR,—I am directed by Secretary Sir James Graham to call your attention to my Letter of the 13th August last, and to request that you will move the Commissioners of Sewers for Westminster and part of Middlesex to favour Sir James Graham, at their earliest convenience, with their observations on the allegations contained in the Pamphlet of Mr. John Leslie.—I am, Sir, &c.

(Signed) H. MANNERS SUTTON.

The chairman said the Court had appointed a committee in September to draw up observations on the pamphlet, in compliance with the request of Sir James Graham. That in consequence of the long period over which the pamphlet ranged, the committee had required many returns from their own officers, and returns also from the Holborn and Finsbury commissioners, and it took some time to prepare these returns; and one from the Holborn and Finsbury commission had only recently been received. At the last meeting of the committee, it had adjourned, that a draft report might be prepared; the draft report was prepared, and the committee would meet on Wednesday next (the 12th inst.) to settle it, and bring their laborious investigations to a close. He would therefore suggest that their answer to the letter of the Secretary of State be, that the committee had closed their investigation, and were preparing their report.

Captain Bague, and afterwards, Mr. William Donaldson, complained that Mr. Hertslet, the clerk, had printed and circulated the letter from Mr. Manners Sutton without having consulted the chairman. The chairman also intimated his disapprobation of the course pursued; all former chairmen had been consulted as to the printing of any paper, and also as to the business paper of the day, and it looked invidious that he, their present chairman, was to be the exception to the law and the practice. Mr. Leslie defended the course adopted. The clerk had received an important communication from the Secretary of State, requiring him to "move the commissioners," and he thought that the best way to move the commissioners, was to let them individually know that the Secretary of State wished them to move. What did the commissioners know about the proceedings of the committee? That committee had voted itself a secret committee; their minutes were closed to the eye of every commissioner: this was a power the committee itself had assumed, without asking the Court. He thought it a dangerous proceeding: he begged in the observation he now made on that secret committee, to be understood as feeling no anxiety about what the committee might report; he was so surrounded by facts, that he considered himself invulnerable. The chairman was anxious that the officers should have no will of their own, but this was not the law. The general statutes authorised the commissioners to elect a chairman at every meeting of the Court, and during the non-sitting of the commissioners, the clerk was the only legally known authority to communicate with. The practice in this Court had been otherwise: here the chairman had been supreme. Many years ago a bricklayer of the name of Gray, had obtained a nomination as a commissioner; he eventually became the chairman of the Court; he contrived to get two nephews of his of the name of Saunders nominated as commissioners; one of these nephews, George Saunders, an architect, subsequently became chairman of this Court, and for 28 years did almost as he liked. The officers had been the mere servants of the various chairmen; he felt satisfied that the commissioners generally would approve of the course Mr. Hertslet had adopted in apprising every commissioner of the letter from the Secretary of State. Mr. Gunter also defended the course pursued.

Mr. W. Donaldson handed in the following notice of motion for the next Court: "That the clerk do not issue any printed circular to the commissioners without the express order of the Court, or the sanction of the chairman."

Mr. Farlar stated that what had been said about the extraordinary powers exercised by the chairman of the Court was perfectly true. When he, Mr. Farlar, was first made a commissioner there was no business paper at all, sent to the commissioners; the chairman brought forward any subject just as he liked, or saw by the parties present that he could carry. The former chairman, Mr. Saunders, used to say when attacked by him, if you had known the Court, Mr. Farlar, when Mr. White was chairman, when his relatives where doing the work, then indeed you might have said it was corrupt. He thought Mr. Hertslet had taken the wise course to print and circulate the letter from the Secretary of State.

The Court then proceeded, "To consider the steps necessary to be taken in consequence of the resignation of Mr. George Hawkins, assistant surveyor. Mr. Leslie to move, that the vacancy in the office of assistant-surveyor be filled up by the appointment of Mr. John Phillips, now second clerk of the works."

Mr. Leslie called upon the Court to support the motion, and he thought they would do so without a dissentient voice, when they considered the course the several recent Courts had adopted. The forms of sewers which Mr. Phillips had made, and which had been so strongly urged upon the Court by the eminent testimonials in their favour, were now the forms adopted by the Court: so large a number as nearly 4,500 feet of sewers of these forms had been applied for and granted this day: who, then, so likely to see them carried out properly as the author of them? Mr. Leslie thought it right to put Mr. Phillips' abilities to the test as to his powers of surveying, levelling, and laying down a section: he had asked Mr. Dowley to allow Mr. Phillips the use of the necessary instruments and labourer for the purpose, which Mr. Dowley readily complied with, and on Monday the 3rd inst. the task set Mr. Phillips was performed. The survey selected was from the outlet of the sewer at the bottom of Northumberland-street, up that street along the Strand, Cockspur-street, Pall-mall, Cleveland-row, and diagonally across the Green-park to the Man-hole, opposite White Horse-street, where nearly all the northern drainage of the metropolis descended. The distance between the two points was about 5,400 feet, the fall was about 3¼ inches per 100 feet. But the bottom of the outlet at Northumberland-street might be lowered to low water-mark, whereby an increased fall of 8 feet might be gained. The result of the task selected for Mr. Phillips was the drawing he then held in his hand, and which he would pass round the Court, that every commissioner might judge the sort of man he wished, for the public interest, to see placed in a situation of increased usefulness, and to be enabled to aid in carrying out those great improvements which the votes of recent Courts had made their own.

Captain Bague, R. N., had the greatest possible pleasure in seconding Mr. Leslie's motion. He thought Mr. Phillips had exhibited so much talent, that the Court would act most wisely in securing his services.

Mr. Gunter very warmly supported the motion. He had not the pleasure of knowing Mr. Phillips, but, from what he had seen of his abilities as a clerk of the works, he felt confident the appointment would be one most beneficial to the public. He understood Mr. Phillips was almost a self-educated man, with considerable talents, which he assiduously cultivated. It would be impossible, after seeing the admirable manner in which the task Mr. Leslie had set Mr. Phillips had been accomplished, to deny his ability. There was one circumstance connected with Mr. Phillips' history which gave him (Mr. Gunter) great pleasure, and it was, that Mr. Phillips, in those hours which many gave to pleasure, idle recreation, or the public-house, had devoted himself to the instruction of others; he had a large class, which he was teaching weekly practical geometry. Such a man deserved encouragement, and he would cheerfully vote for his appointment.

Mr. Le Breton rose to move an amendment, "That the office of assistant-surveyor, now vacant by the resignation of Mr. George Hawkins, be not filled up until the whole question of the efficiency of the surveyors' department, and the expediency of making a change therein, be considered at a special meeting, to be held to consider the same."

Mr. Allason very briefly seconded the amendment, which was supported by Mr. Hawkes and Mr. Harrison, who avowed, that if the amendment was not carried, he would vote for Mr. Phillips. A division being called for, the numbers were, for the amendment, 10; against it, 10. The casting vote was given by the chairman in favour of the amendment. The names of the commissioners voting were, for the amendment—Messrs. Allason, Boodle, jun., Beachcroft, Cantwell, Crace, W. Donaldson, W. B. France, Harrison, Hawkes, Le Breton, and Willoughby; against the amendment—Hon. F. Byng, Capt. Bague, Messrs. Branscombe, Cumberlege, Farlar, Fuller, Gunter, Leslie, Moss, and Wood.

The Court then ordered a Special Court on Friday, Nov. 14th, at one o'clock precisely, "To consider as to the efficiency of the surveyors' department, and as to the expediency of making a change therein."

TOWER HAMLETS COMMISSION.

TENDERS for sewer in Green Street, Bethnal Green: length, 980 feet; 4 feet by 2 feet 6 in; average depth of digging, 11 feet 6 inches.

Blackburn	£690
Crook	640
Curtis	634
Edwards	625
Stewart	620
Munday	617
Smith	600
Hill and Son	587
Jay	579
Livermore	543

Correspondence.

THE EGG-SHAPED SEWER.

SIR,—I feel much gratified with my fellow rate-payers, at the result of the decision of the commissioners of sewers for this division; the sixteen against five will, I hope, settle the point in dispute, as to the mud-holding sewer with perpendicular sides, and the egg-shaped sewer. One half the sum collected for rates within the last twenty years would, if it had been expended upon the new plan, have made the drainage perfect. I am sure the public will feel indebted to THE BUILDER for the assistance it has afforded in the good cause.

I am not looking at this as a local question only; the subject of proper drainage is now mooted throughout the nation, and we may hope to see the egg-shaped sewer introduced universally. As the egg-shape now in use in the Finsbury division will, I have no doubt, in time come into general use, it would be well if THE BUILDER could ascertain, who was the inventor of this shape, as I consider it important as an historical fact. Probably Mr. Roe, if applied to, would state whether it was his invention, or whether he received the idea from any other person.—I am, Sir, &c.

Westminster. E. E. E.

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